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The Role of Defense Budgets in Civil-Military Relations

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by

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April 1992

DEFENSE BUDGET PROJECT

The Defense Budget Project is an independent, nonprofit research organization established in 1983 for the purpose of examining national security policies and defense spending issues. The Project provides its analyses and information to policymakers, media, private business and the general public, and is funded by grants from major foundations. Dr. Gordon Adams is the Project's founder and director.

Dramatic change in the international security environment has renewed interest in how military policy and defense spending priorities are set in the United States, and whether this complex system can serve as a model for new governments emerging in the post-Cold War world. This primer is intended to provide a basic introduction to the U.S. defense budget process for those seeking either a better understanding of the current debate about U.S. defense spending or lessons to apply to the democratization process in other countries.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The primer was first presented as a paper at a conference on civil-military relations sponsored by the Agency for International Development and The American University in Montevideo, Uruguay in March 1991. Defense Budget Project staff also distributed a draft of the primer at a meeting of U.S. and Russian legislators and analysts held in Moscow in Autumn 1991, as part of a project on legislative oversight sponsored by Global Outlook of Palo Alto, California.

The Project thanks Stanley Collender, Paul Robert Gehman Jr., Edward Kolodziej, Alice Maroni, Allen Schick and Aaron Wildavsky for their comments on the manuscript. A special thank you is extended to David Crampton, the Project's Everett intern during the summer of 1991 and a graduate student at the Institute of Public Policy Studies of the University of Michigan, and Elizabeth Heeter, a graduate student at The American University's School of International Service, for their steadfast attention to the details necessary to complete the primer.

I would also like to thank the Defense Budget Project staff and interns: Laureen Andrews, Michael Bryant, William Hoehn, Steven Kosiak, Carol Lessure, Conrad Schmidt and Paul Taibl.

I. INTRODUCTION

Despite a long tradition of political stability in the U.S. civil-military relationship, the debate between the U.S. military establishment and elected officials has been described by many analysts, policymakers and military officials as troubled, contentious and mistrustful. Stepping away from the internal vagaries of the U.S. political process, however, one is struck by how relatively cooperative the civil-military relationship has actually been over time, when compared to such relationships in other countries.[1]

This paper highlights one key ingredient in this basically stable civil-military relationship in the United States: consideration of the annual budget of the Department of Defense (DoD) and its projected five-year fiscal plan for national defense.[2] Though there are many other dimensions of the relationship between the U.S. military and civilian leadership, virtually all of them are played out through the defense budget. The defense budget is a mechanism for setting priorities between the administration and the military services and among the services themselves. Defense policies are reflected in the budget, which provides the resources to implement those policies.[3] Hardware choices are only possible with budgetary funding. Troops are trained and exercised, bases built and sustained, and ships sailed with the resources provided in the defense budget.

The underlying message of this primer is that debate and compromise in the development of the annual defense budget can encourage long-term stability and a broad degree of consensus on defense policy, the roles of civilian and military leaders, and their expectations of each other. Through this process, the military services express their

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[1] For one discussion of civil-military relations in the United States, see Samuel P. Huntington, *The Common Defense* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1966).

[2] For ease of reference, the terms "Pentagon" and "Department of Defense" (DoD) are used interchangeably in this paper to describe the overall activities of the Department.

[3] Arnold Kanter has noted that "budget outcomes are the quantitative statement of defense policy." *Defense Politics: A Budgetary Perspective* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979), p. 6.

preferences and civilian leaders in the executive branch exercise their authority. Elected legislators use the budget debate to fashion their own role in military policy and conduct oversight of the activities of the military services and the Pentagon. In the United States, the defense budget is at the very heart of civil–military relations; it is the communications medium linking military policymakers with elected representatives.

Bitter disputes between Congress and the Department of Defense over the budget are often in the headlines, creating the impression that the civil–military relationship is uncooperative and antagonistic. While there are often important differences between the budget requested by the Pentagon and the one passed by the congressional committees, most of the defense budget is non–controversial. One recent study found that the majority of line items in the president's defense budget request are accepted without revision by the House and Senate Armed Services committees and the House and Senate Appropriations committees.[4] While the more than two–year process of elaborating the U.S. defense budget is arduous and often contentious, its ultimate impact, over time, is to enhance the stability of the civil–military relationship.

This paper examines crucial ingredients of the defense budget process in the United States: the steps and timing of that process in the executive branch and Congress, the historic role of civilian control in the executive branch, the flow of information on the budget to Congress, the extent and manner in which Congress alters the defense budget request, the "political economy" of the defense budget as it affects Congress, and the role of mediating/information institutions in the defense budget process.[5]

Viewed in a comparative perspective, the U.S. political process may provide valuable lessons, both positive and negative, for nations with more troubled civil–military relations. Problems in this relationship can lead to a total breakdown in communications and disruption of the civil order.[6] The creation of stable democracies in other nations depends on many factors, not the least being strong, equitable economic growth. A stable civil–military relationship is another ingredient of a strong democracy; perhaps some lessons may be

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[4] Paul Robert Gehman Jr., "Congressional Committees and National Defense Investments 1985–1988: Investigation Into the Issues of Request Size, Recommendation Sequence, and Relative Committee Preferences," unpublished dissertation (University of Rochester, July 1990). Gehman found pure consensus between the president's budget request and the four congressional committee reports in over half the procurement and RDT&E account line items he examined in fiscal years (FY) 1985–88.

[5] A glossary of key budget terms is located at the end of the report, as is a bibliography on the subject of civil–military relations.

[6] On the Latin American military, see Alfred Stepan, *Rethinking Military Politics: Brazil and the Southern Cone* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1988). On Africa, see Samuel Decalo, "Modalities of Civil–Military Stability in Africa," *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 27, pp. 547–78, December 1989. For Asia, see Viberto Selochan, ed., *The Military, the State, and Development in Asia and the Pacific* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1991).

learned from the U.S. experience which would help facilitate trust and understanding between these two critical sets of actors in other societies.

At the start some caveats are in order, lest it be thought that the U.S. defense budget process could simply be transplanted to other countries. The idiosyncracies of U.S. defense budgeting are linked, in part, to the idiosyncracies of American politics. One crucial difference between the United States and other countries is that the American structure of government is *not* parliamentary, in which the parliamentary majority selects the executive. In recent U.S. history, Congress and the White House have most often been controlled by different parties; coalition-building, therefore, is a basic requirement for securing legislative approval of an executive branch budget proposal. The president's party cannot be automatically relied upon to provide a majority for the budget in Congress. In fact, except for the four years of the Carter Administration, the president's party has not commanded a majority in both chambers of Congress since 1968.

Another distinguishing feature of U.S. politics is 'transparency' with respect to the disclosure of government information. A privately-owned press and a strong political/cultural preference for making public more, rather than less, information on government activities prevent the creation of laws -- such as the British Official Secrets Act -- which would deter disclosure of defense and national security information, and consequently hinder debate. Americans, in general, mistrust their government, weak as it is by comparison with other governments, especially in the wake of the Vietnam War and the Watergate incident. Demand for public disclosure and policy debates occur at levels that sometimes bewilder policymakers in other nations. This condition of transparency in information gives ordinary citizens and professional defense analysts the ability to track U.S. defense spending in great detail and helps deter both military and civilian defense budget participants from subverting the process.

Still another key ingredient of American politics is the constitutional basis of legislative responsibility for defense budgeting. According to the Constitution, Congress must be involved in the defense budget process since "Congress shall have the power . . . to provide for the common defense of the United States, . . . [including the power] to raise and support armies, . . . to provide and maintain a navy, . . . [and] to make rules for the government and regulation of the land and naval forces."[7] While other countries require their legislative branch to review the defense budget, the U.S. Congress may be unique in its ability to make significant changes in the budget request.

Like its counterparts in other countries, the U.S. military is often suspicious of elected officials' involvement in the inner sanctum of defense policy. Yet, they recognize that funding for military programs and missions cannot simply be taken for granted; it must be raised through public debate over the purposes for which it is to be spent. Thus, defense

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[7] *Constitution of the United States*, Article 1, Section 8.

budgets are, to some extent, influenced by a consensus built between representative government and military planners.

It is also important to note that the history of the U.S. civil-military relationship has not been static or non-controversial. There are times when the military has held civilian legislative leadership at arms length, such as during the 1991 Gulf War, and times when Congress has felt at odds with the military, such as in the debates over the conduct of the Vietnam War.

By and large, however, the preparation of the defense budget and its progress through Congress have served as consensus-building processes, enhancing stability in civil-military relations by developing agreement between legislators and the military.[8] Over time, this stability has allowed the development of some degree of understanding and trust between civilian political institutions and the military in the United States. This understanding is an important ingredient in creating a political context in which military coups are virtually unimaginable, while ensuring that resources of some magnitude continue to flow to national defense purposes.

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[8] Recognizing that an apparently contentious process is actually relatively stable, some criticize the civil-military relationship as a "military-industrial complex." For this perspective see Richard F. Kaufman, *The War Profiteer* (New York: Doubleday, 1972); Paul A.C. Koistinen, *The Military-Industrial Complex: A Historical Perspective* (New York: Praeger, 1980); and Seymour Melman, *The Permanent War Economy* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1964), among others. Another view of this relationship describes it as a "subgovernment" or an "iron triangle," similar to other private sector/congressional/executive branch relationships in the federal government. See Gordon Adams, *The Politics of Defense Contracting: The Iron Triangle* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books, 1981), especially Chapter 1, note 18. Also see Kenneth R. Mayer, *The Political Economy of Defense Contracting* (Hartford, CT: Yale University Press, 1991). For further discussion on this point, see Chapter III.

II. THE DEFENSE BUDGET PROCESS

Before World War II, the United States spent relatively little on defense, preferring to rely on geographic isolation from potential enemies and a small standing military for protection. Assumption of a much more global role after World War II and the Cold War rivalry with the Soviet Union, however, led to much higher, sustained levels of defense spending. Defense budgets have been in the $200-300 billion range during most of the post-World War II period, surging past $300 billion during the conflicts in Korea and Vietnam, and during the Reagan Administration's peacetime defense buildup in the 1980s (see Table I and Figure I).[9] This funding supports the personnel, operations, weapons programs and research of the four U.S. military services — Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps — as well as the activities of a number of overarching defense agencies and the Office of the Secretary of Defense (see Figure II).[10]

To understand the civil-military relationship through which this budget is defined and approved, it is best to begin with the executive branch — the Pentagon and the White House. Within the executive branch, annual defense budgets are prepared by the military services, reviewed within the Pentagon by the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) and by the White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB), and, finally, submitted to Congress for debate, amendment and approval.

[9] These defense figures include all spending for the U.S. armed forces and the federally funded, state-run National Guard. They do not include police forces, internal security agencies, border patrols, veterans benefits or pension pay-outs, which are sometimes included in other countries' defense budgets.

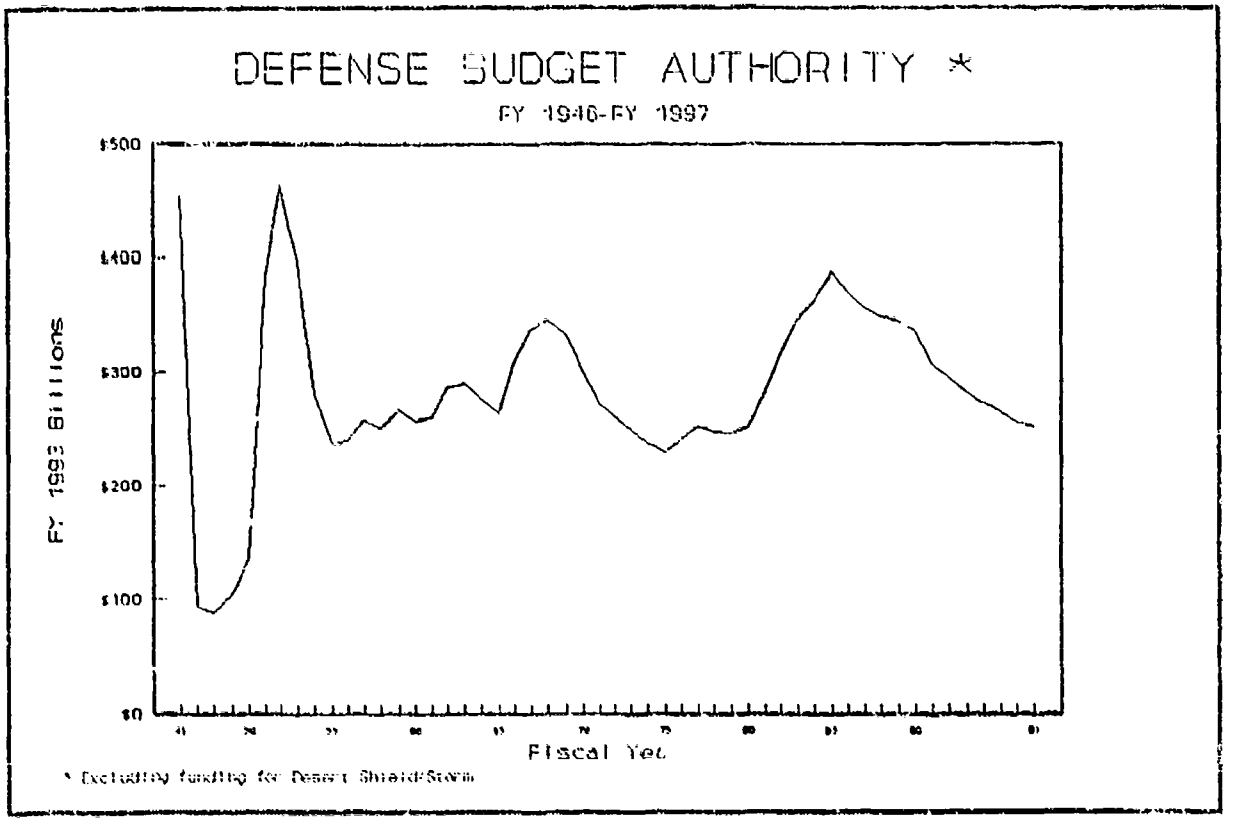
[10] Defense Agencies outside of the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marines include the National Security Agency, National Reconnaissance Office, Defense Intelligence Agency, Defense Mapping Agency, Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency and Strategic Defense Initiative Organization, among others.

Table 1

NATIONAL DEFENSE (050) BUDGET AUTHORITY IN CURRENT AND CONSTANT DOLLARS (in billions)

	Current Dollar 050 Budget Authority	Constant FY 1993 050 Budget Authority
1946	$44.0	$453.8
1947	$9.0	$93.9
1948	$9.5	$88.5
1949	$10.9	$103.9
1950	$16.5	$135.6
1951	$57.8	$383.6
1952	$67.5	$463.4
1953	$56.9	$395.8
1954	$38.7	$280.8
1955	$32.9	$235.6
1956	$35.0	$238.6
1957	$39.4	$257.6
1958	$40.0	$249.6
1959	$45.1	$266.1
1960	$44.3	$256.6
1961	$45.1	$259.7
1962	$50.2	$285.7
1963	$52.1	$290.5
1964	$51.6	$275.6
1965	$50.6	$262.5
1966	$64.4	$309.4
1967	$73.1	$337.2
1968	$77.8	$345.2
1969	$78.5	$332.7
1970	$75.3	$299.0
1971	$72.7	$271.4
1972	$76.4	$261.1
1973	$79.1	$248.9
1974	$81.5	$236.3
1975	$86.2	$228.5
1976	$97.3	$240.5
1977	$110.2	$250.7
1978	$117.2	$246.7
1979	$126.5	$245.4
1980	$143.9	$250.1
1981	$180.0	$282.8
1982	$216.5	$316.4
1983	$245.0	$345.1
1984	$265.2	$362.1
1985	$294.7	$385.9
1986	$289.1	$369.0
1987	$287.4	$355.6
1988	$292.0	$348.4
1989	$299.6	$343.7
1990	$301.3	$335.6
1991	$288.7	$306.5
1992	$283.8	$294.3
1993	$291.0	$281.0
1994	$281.6	$271.3
1995	$284.3	$263.8
1996	$285.7	$255.4
1997	$290.6	$251.3

Figure 1



Role of the Executive Branch

The executive branch process is complex, cumbersome and lengthy. The definition of military and fiscal guidance in the Pentagon normally takes place 18 to 20 months before the fiscal year begins. Much of this initial planning is done by the commanders of the various combatant commands,[11] the military services, the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Office of the Secretary of Defense, long before the budget formally reaches OMB. Within this framework,

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[11] As of 1991 there were 10 Unified and Specified Commands in the U.S. military: European Command, Pacific Command, Atlantic Command, Southern Command, Central Command, Space Command, Special Operations Command, Transportation Command, Strategic Air Command and Forces Command. In his testimony before the House Armed Services Committee on February 7, 1991, General Colin Powell, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, suggested that these commands may be regrouped into "force packages," including a Strategic Command (strategic forces), Atlantic Forces (Europe and Middle East), Pacific Forces (Southeast Asia and the Pacific), Contingency Forces (all theaters) and four support activities (Transportation, Space, Reconstitution, and Research and Development). "Statement of General Colin L. Powell, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff," Armed Services Committee, U.S. House of Representatives, February 7, 1991, p. 8. In June 1992, the new Strategic Command formally will come into existence.

budget plans are drawn up for the target fiscal year, as well as for the following budget year.[12] In addition, the services assemble additional years of planning data, much of which is ultimately provided to Congress.[13]

Even at this early stage, however, the process is not untouched by civilian leadership. The decisions made in previous years by the Pentagon and Congress have created a pre-existing framework within which the military forecasts future budgets; the past drives the present and the future. Moreover, as the four military services prepare their budget plans, civilian staff of OMB participate in internal Pentagon discussions, having the opportunity to communicate White House preferences and receiving early indications of service desires.[14] Even in the early stages of budget preparation, the services must begin setting priorities and accepting funding trade-offs between personnel, operations and maintenance, research and hardware acquisition.

In the executive branch defense budget process, the central civilian actor is the Office of the Secretary of Defense. The evolution of this civilian authority has a long history. Before 1947, as the Constitution suggests, two agencies dealt with defense budgeting -- the War Department (Army) and the Navy Department, each administered by a civilian secretary. There was no separate Air Force and no overarching Secretary of Defense. One of the lessons of the Second World War was the need for an integrating agency, leading to the creation of the Department of Defense in 1947 (and, incidentally, a new Department of the Air Force within the Department of Defense, based on the former Army Air Corps).

Military service budget planning covers the funding requirements of military personnel, operations and maintenance, procurement, research and development, military

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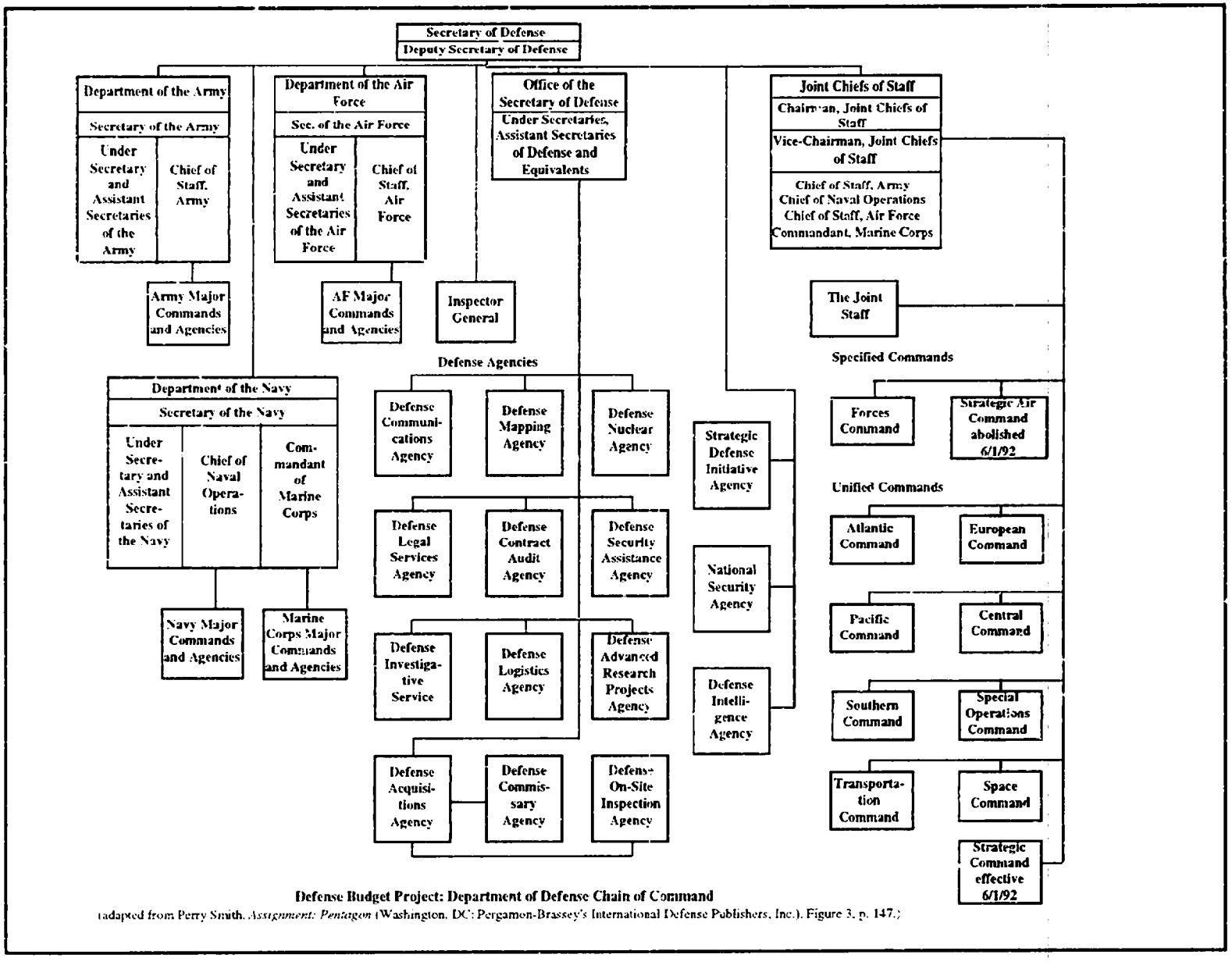
[12] The U.S. federal fiscal year is from October 1 to September 30. Since FY 1988, the Department of Defense has prepared two-year defense budgets; the FY 1992-93 budget request was released February 4, 1991, and the second year was amended on January 28, 1992.

[13] This multi-year plan is known as the FYDP, and constitutes the basic long-term defense planning document. Previously, this plan covered a five-year period; with the arrival of two-year budgeting, it has become a six-year plan and FYDP now represents "Future Years Defense Plan," as opposed to the former "Five Year Defense Plan."

[14] See Richard Stubbing, *The Defense Game* (New York: Harper & Row, 1986), especially Chapters 3-4.



Defense Budget Project: Department of Defense Chain of Command

(adapted from Perry Smith, *Assignment: Pentagon* (Washington, DC: Pergamon-Brassey's International Defense Publishers, Inc.), Figure 3, p. 147.)

Figure II

construction, family housing and stock funds.[15] Table II lists military planning budgets for FY 1980–97. Within each of these categories, budget planning data provide details on subcategories and specific programs (sometimes called "line items" or "program elements"). Table III shows a breakdown of the services' procurement plans for FY 1990–93. These subcategories are broken down further into detailed line items. Table IV shows the breakdown for research and development spending. Once approved by the military and civilian leadership of the particular service, budget plans are submitted to the Office of the Secretary of Defense in the form of Program Objective Memoranda (POMs), which describe budget plans for specific programs. These POMs are further reviewed within the Office of the Secretary of Defense, which accepts, rejects or revises them; they are then returned to the services for further comment and negotiation.[16]

This entire process, which precedes any formal White House or congressional consideration of the defense budget, involves voluminous data analysis and endless, lengthy internal meetings and discussions. There is ample opportunity in this process for elements of the decisions under consideration to be disclosed anonymously to Congress or to the media, thus involving civilian leadership in the debate. In fact, it is sometimes in the interests of the advocates of a particular program to leak important information in order to stimulate support for, or opposition to, a course of action being considered within a service.

For example, in the FY 1992–93 budget planning process, it became known that the Department of the Navy was considering requesting funding for new F–14D aircraft, though that program had been terminated in the FY 1990 budget.[17] The function fulfilled by making such information public can be seen two ways: either it could stimulate support for such a decision among the advocates of the F–14D outside of the Pentagon, or it could serve

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[15] *Military personnel* funding covers wages and a variety of benefits for the military services' uniformed personnel. *Operations and maintenance* funds cover the costs of training, exercising, equipment maintenance, health and the acquisition of fuel and consumable supplies used by the services, as well as much of the wages for civilian employees of the Department of Defense. *Research and development* includes research performed inside the services and by service-related laboratories, as well as that contracted out to the private sector. *Procurement* covers the costs of acquiring military hardware, ammunition, ammunition and support equipment for the services. *Military construction* covers the costs of construction and repair for military facilities and bases in the United States and overseas. *Family housing* covers the costs of building accommodations for military personnel in the United States and overseas. The *defense business operations* fund covers the costs of maintaining and operating the supply system for the services.

[16] The Office of the Secretary of Defense maintains a strong internal capability for such review, including staff on manpower issues, the Office of Program Analysis and Evaluation, with responsibility for weapons program reviews, and the Office of the Comptroller, with responsibility for overall budget review and preparation.

[17] Excerpts from an internal memorandum sent by Navy Secretary Lawrence Garrett to Secretary of Defense Richard Cheney appeared in the *Washington Post*. In that memorandum, Garrett suggested reinstating production of the F–14D. George C. Wilson, "Resumed Production of F–14 Urged," *Washington Post*, December 10, 1990.

Table II

NATIONAL DEFENSE BUDGET AUTHORITY BY TITLE *
FY 1980 - FY 1997
budget authority in current billions; growth after inflation

	FY80	FY81	FY82	FY83	FY84	FY85	FY86	FY87	FY88	FY89	FY90	FY91	FY92	FY93	FY94	FY95	FY96	FY97
NATIONAL DEFENSE	143.9	180.0	216.5	245.0	265.2	294.7	289.1	287.4	292.0	299.6	301.3	288.7	283.8	281.0	281.6	284.3	285.7	290.6
real increase		13%	12%	9%	5%	7%	-4%	-4%	-2%	-1%	-2%	-9%	-4%	-5%	-3%	-3%	-3%	-2%
INVESTMENT ACCOUNTS:																		
Procurement	35.3	48.0	64.5	80.4	86.2	96.8	92.5	80.2	80.1	79.4	81.4	66.5	58.5	54.4	58.6	53.3	61.5	63.1
real increase		26%	27%	19%	4%	9%	-7%	-16%	-4%	-4%	-1%	-21%	-15%	-10%	4%	5%	-6%	-1%
Research & Development	13.6	16.6	20.1	22.8	26.9	31.3	33.6	35.6	36.5	37.5	36.5	36.1	36.9	38.8	39.7	37.9	36.8	36.0
real increase		13%	14%	10%	14%	13%	4%	3%	-1%	-1%	-6%	-5%	-1%	2%	-1%	-8%	-6%	-5%
Military Construction	2.3	3.4	4.9	4.5	4.5	5.5	5.3	5.1	5.3	5.7	5.1	5.2	4.9	6.2	9.0	7.2	6.0	5.5
real increase		37%	39%	-11%	-3%	19%	-7%	-7%	1%	3%	-14%	-1%	-9%	22%	40%	-23%	-19%	-11%
DOE Defense Activities	3.0	3.7	4.7	5.7	6.6	7.3	7.3	7.5	7.7	8.1	9.7	11.6	12.0	12.1	12.7	13.4	14.1	14.8
real increase		10%	21%	16%	11%	7%	-3%	-1%	0%	1%	16%	14%	1%	-2%	1%	1%	2%	1%
Subtotal, Investment	54.1	71.7	94.2	113.4	124.1	141.9	138.7	128.4	129.7	130.8	132.7	119.4	112.3	111.6	120.1	121.7	118.5	119.4
NON-INVESTMENT ACCOUNTS:																		
Oper. & Maintenance	46.4	55.5	62.5	66.5	71.0	77.8	74.9	79.6	81.6	86.2	87.0	85.3	86.4	86.5	83.7	85.4	88.1	90.2
real increase		9%	7%	4%	5%	7%	-5%	3%	-1%	1%	-3%	-8%	0%	-3%	-7%	-2%	-1%	-1%
Military Personnel	41.1	48.5	55.7	61.1	64.9	67.8	67.8	74.0	76.6	78.5	78.6	78.4	78.3	77.1	72.3	71.9	73.6	75.6
real increase		3%	0%	5%	2%	-6%	-3%	6%	0%	-1%	-1%	-4%	-3%	-6%	-10%	-5%	-2%	-1%
Family Housing	1.5	2.0	2.2	2.7	2.7	2.9	2.8	3.1	3.2	3.3	3.1	3.3	3.6	4	3.9	3.7	3.7	3.7
real increase		20%	2%	20%	-4%	5%	-5%	7%	1%	-2%	-8%	1%	6%	8%	-6%	-7%	-3%	-5%
Invest. as % of 050	37.6	39.8	43.5	46.3	46.8	47.9	48.0	44.7	44.4	43.6	44.0	41.4	39.6	39.7	42.6	42.8	41.5	41.1
O&M as % of 050	32.2	30.8	28.8	27.1	26.8	26.4	25.9	27.7	28.0	28.8	28.9	29.5	30.4	30.8	29.7	30.0	30.8	31.0
Mil. Pers. as % of 050	28.5	26.9	25.7	24.9	24.5	23.0	23.4	25.7	26.2	26.2	26.1	27.2	27.6	27.4	25.7	25.3	25.8	26.0

* Excluding funding for Desert Shield/Storm

to mobilize the opponents of the program to prevent such a decision. In either case, the ultimate budget submission to Congress did not request any new F-14Ds, despite the rumor that the Navy desired them. In this way, constituencies outside the Department of Defense become an important part of the process of consensus-building for defense, even before formal budget submission.

The history of defense budgeting since 1947 has involved constant tension and interaction between the Secretary of Defense and both the civilian and military leadership of the military services. With respect to the budget, perhaps the most significant benchmark was the creation of the Planning, Programming and Budgeting System (PPBS) under Secretary McNamara and his expansion of the capabilities of the Office of the Secretary to review and make final decisions on the budgetary desires of the services.[18] Since these decisions involve resource allocation, they are critical to service autonomy, and are the primary spending limits on services.

The ebb and flow of this relationship can be loosely described as one of secretary dominance during the 1960s, gradual reassertion of military service dominance in the 1970s, clear service dominance in the 1980s, and some return in the direction of the Office of the Secretary of Defense apparent in the 1990s.[19]

Despite the complexities of this budgeting relationship, however, the military services clearly accept the reality that the civilian secretary plays a central role in the resource allocation process in any given administration. There appears to be a complementary recognition within the Office of the Secretary that the military services have the principal responsibility for resource planning, with major decisions about overall funding levels and some programs being made by the secretary and OSD staff. This relationship is never free of tension, or even some mistrust, but there is also a certain predictability to the process and a general agreement on the "rules of the game" inside the Pentagon.

The executive branch process is finalized within the White House, where the defense budget is reviewed by the national security staff of OMB. This staff scrutinizes items still in disagreement, raises questions about program decisions, and integrates the DoD budget request into the overall presidential budget. Here, considerations external to the desires of the military services or the Department of Defense can enter into the defense budget process. For policy or political reasons, the White House may have different views about specific

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[18] Much of the PPBS system has been revised and its impact eroded over the succeeding 25 years. See William J. Weida and Frank L. Gertcher, *The Political Economy of National Defense* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1987), p. 60.

[19] See Stubbing's discussion of defense secretaries from McNamara to Weinberger, *The Defense Game*, *supra* #14, Chapters 14-19.

Table III

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE PROCUREMENT BUDGET
(current millions, total obligational authority)

	FY 1990	FY 1991	FY 1992	FY 1993
ARMY	13,899	10,861	8,220	6,814
real growth		-24%	-27%	-20%
Aircraft	3,713	1,248	1,829	1,291
real growth		-67%	42%	-32%
Missiles	2,266	2,973	1,106	982
real growth		27%	-64%	-14%
Weapons & Tracked CVs	2,434	1,941	775	623
real growth		-23%	-61%	-22%
Ammunition	1,906	2,047	1,368	824
real growth		4%	-35%	-42%
Other Procurement	3,580	2,652	3,141	3,094
real growth		-28%	15%	-5%
NAVY	34,600	29,276	25,376	22,150
real growth		-18%	-16%	-15%
Aircraft	9,178	8,591	7,153	6,654
real growth		-9%	-19%	-10%
Weapons	5,238	6,434	4,415	3,719
real growth		19%	-34%	-18%
Shipbuilding & Convers.	11,514	7,374	6,464	5,320
real growth		-38%	-15%	-20%
Other Procurement	7,470	5,722	6,307	5,869
real growth		-26%	7%	-10%
Marine Corps	1,100	1,156	1,037	589
real growth		2%	-13%	-45%
AIR FORCE	30,145	24,119	24,555	24,654
real growth		-23%	-1%	-3%
Aircraft	15,347	9,423	10,715	10,929
real growth		-41%	10%	-1%
Missiles	6,292	6,185	5,218	5,379
real growth		-5%	-18%	0%
Other Procurement	8,506	8,511	8,622	8,347
real growth		-3%	-2%	-6%
OTHER				
Defense Agencies	1,359	2,597	2,173	2,147
real growth		85%	-19%	-4%
National Guard & Reserve	991	2,498	836	0
real growth		144%	-68%	-100%
Defense Production Act	50	50	0	0
real growth		-2%	-100%	0%
Chemical Destruction	254	293	374	526
real growth		11%	24%	36%
TOTAL	81,297	69,694	61,534	56,291
real growth		-17%	-14%	-11%

Table IV

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT BUDGET
(current millions)

	1990	1991	1992	1993
RESEARCH CATEGORIES				
Research	936	1,157	1,024	1,124
real growth		19.2%	-14.2%	6.2%
Exploratory Development	2,408	2,730	2,892	2,986
real growth		9.3%	2.7%	-0.1%
Advanced Development	10,249	10,769	10,642	11,373
real growth		1.4%	-4.2%	3.4%
Engineering Development	11,025	8,702	10,302	8,994
real growth		-23.9%	14.8%	-15.5%
Management & Support	2,775	2,866	2,886	2,899
real growth		-0.4%	-2.4%	-2.8%
Operational Systems Development	9,238	8,646	10,593	11,436
real growth		-9.7%	18.8%	4.5%
TOTAL RDT&E	36,632	34,870	38,340	38,813
real growth		-8.2%	6.6%	-2.0%

programs or spending levels and seek changes.[20] Once these disagreements have been resolved, the budget is then submitted to Congress, usually nine months ahead of the fiscal year which it is intended to fund.

White House control with respect to civilian involvement in the defense budget is somewhat more tenuous. The authority of OMB, in particular, has varied over the years. Consideration by OMB is one of the stages in the process where the trade-offs between defense and non-defense spending must be considered. This office had significant authority over defense resource levels and even some resource decisions in the 1970s, but the message was clearly communicated in the early 1980s that resources would be generous for defense and OMB would not scrutinize programs in much detail.[21] The end of the Cold War and

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[20] Although it was not a part of the formal budget process, the Carter Administration decision to terminate the B-1 bomber program in 1977 was made at the White House level, with the support of the Secretary of Defense. Nick Kotz, *Wild Blue Yonder: Money, Politics and the B-1 Bomber* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1988), Chapters 12-13. In the later years of the Reagan Administration, OMB frequently sought to lower the overall level of defense spending requested by the Department of Defense, as part of deficit reduction efforts in the federal government. David A. Stockman, *The Triumph of Politics* (New York: Harper & Row, 1986), pp. 277-99.

[21] Stubbing, *The Defense Game, supra* #14, p. 85. OMB director David Stockman made repeated efforts, with limited success, to hold down the level of defense budgets, but Secretary of Defense Casper Weinberger generally prevailed with the apparent support of President Reagan.

severe budget constraints in the 1990s may give OMB greater authority in future defense spending decisions.

Since the 1940s, when defense spending began to reach consistently high levels, the United States has not had an administration which could truly be said to be hostile to the military or to military spending, thus narrowing the parameters within which civil–military tensions occur in the executive branch. In general, civilian control of defense budgeting exists in the executive branch, while much of the detailed budget planning is left to the military and decisions on major programs and budget levels are made at the civilian level.[22]

Congressional Consideration of the Defense Budget

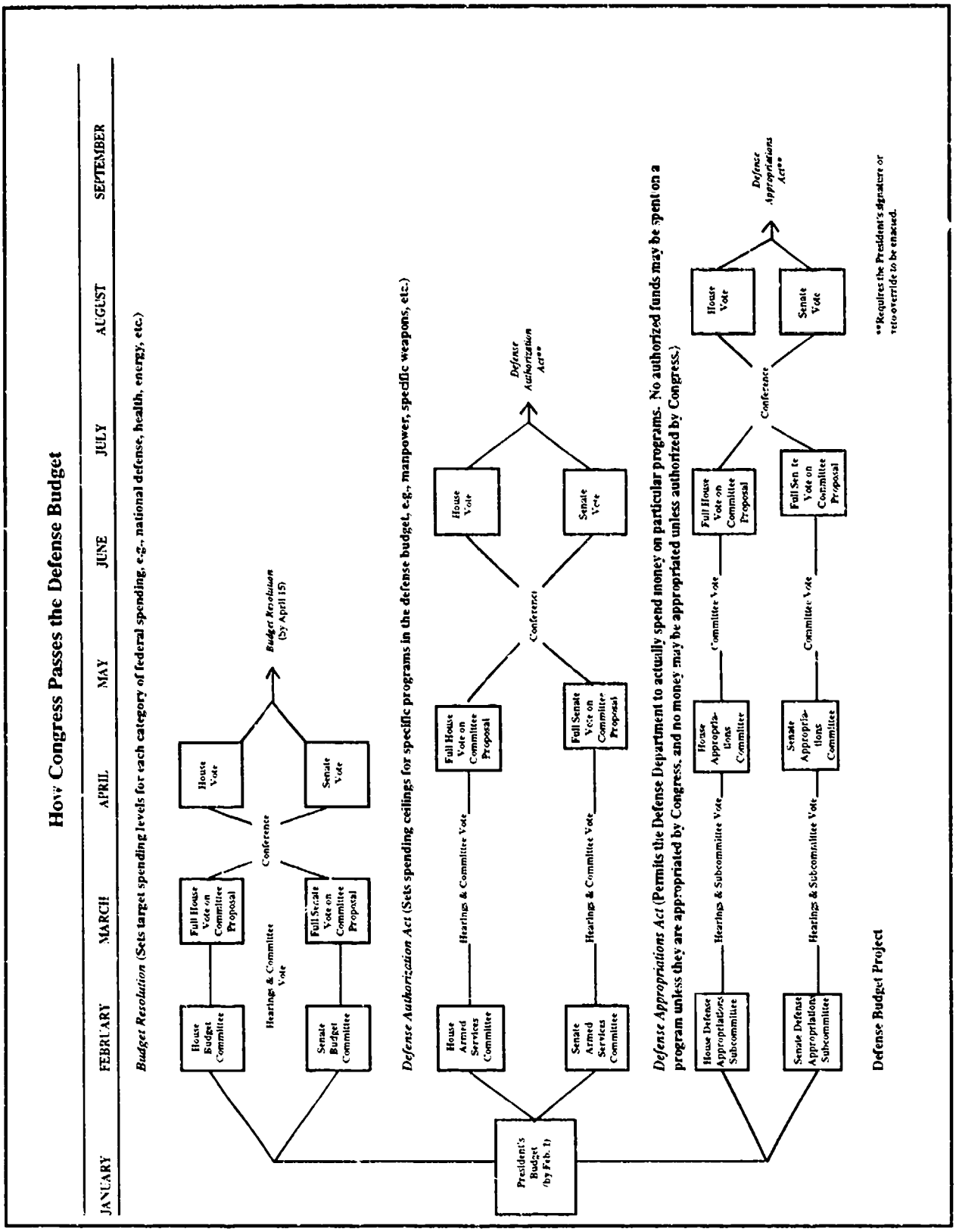
The submission of the Pentagon's budget request to Congress sets the framework for debating defense spending and policy. The budget lays out the policies, programs and funding levels for national defense, providing Congress with the opportunity for hearings and debate over national defense issues. The congressional process for handling the defense budget is illustrated in Figure III.

What is striking about the role of elected legislators in the defense budget process is the staggering volume of information they receive on the budget. Observers from other countries are often overwhelmed by the amount of information published by the administration on the defense budget, including the OMB budget document; an annual report by the Secretary of Defense; detailed descriptions and cost data on major weapon programs, research and development, military construction, and operations and maintenance programs; itemization of military construction projects; detailed data on the composition of the military forces; a volume of financial data on DoD spending; an annual volume of historical data on DoD spending covering more than 40 years; and a variety of specialized briefing sheets and publications, all in the public domain.

Moreover, Congress and its defense committees receive all this data and classified documentation justifying the Defense Department's budget requests in addition to unclassified and classified briefings and testimony from a stream of witnesses from the Department of Defense and the military services. Despite the suspicion that may exist between the military and Congress, by contrast with the military of virtually any other country in the world the Pentagon is a veritable font of information. From the start, Congress faces less of a problem

[22] The Reagan era may be seen as an exception to this generalization, given the executive decision to provide generous resources to the military and leave the vast bulk of allocation decisions to the services themselves.

Figure III


How Congress Passes the Defense Budget
JANUARY
FEBRUARY
MARCH
APRIL
MAY
JUNE
JULY
AUGUST
SEPTEMBER
Budget Resolution (Sets target spending levels for each category of federal spending, e.g., national defense, health, energy, etc.)
House Budget Committee
Full House Vote on Committee Proposal
Hearings & Committee Vote
Senate Budget Committee
Full Senate Vote on Committee Proposal
Conference
House Vote
Senate Vote
Budget Resolution (by April 15)
President's Budget (by Feb. 1)
Defense Authorization Act (Sets spending ceilings for specific programs in the defense budget, e.g., manpower, specific weapons, etc.)
House Armed Services Committee
Hearings & Committee Vote
Full House Vote on Committee Proposal
Senate Armed Services Committee
Full Senate Vote on Committee Proposal
Conference
House Vote
Senate Vote
Defense Authorization Act**
Defense Appropriations Act (Permits the Defense Department to actually spend money on particular programs. No authorized funds may be spent on a program unless they are appropriated by Congress, and no money may be appropriated unless authorized by Congress.)
House Defense Appropriations Subcommittee
Hearings & Subcommittee Vote
House Appropriations Committee
Committee Vote
Full House Vote on Committee Proposal
Senate Defense Appropriations Subcommittee
Hearings & Subcommittee Vote
Senate Appropriations Committee
Committee Vote
Full Senate Vote on Committee Proposal
Conference
House Vote
Senate Vote
Defense Appropriations Act**
**Requires the President's signature or veto override to be enacted.
Defense Budget Project

ferreting out secrets from the Pentagon than it does sifting through the volume of data to separate the important from the insignificant.[23]

This transparency of information about the defense budget influences both civilian and military participants in the process. Military planners know their requests must make some sense to the ordinary taxpayer who will read about them in the newspaper. Members of Congress know they cannot lobby for favored weapons projects in total secrecy. The Department of Defense holds twice weekly briefings in an effort to satisfy the constant demands of the press to be fully informed of up-to-the-minute developments in U.S. defense policy.

The formal institutions and process through which Congress carries out its constitutional responsibilities for the defense budget have become complex over the past 200 years. Congressional committees play the key role in this process. The Appropriations committees of the House and Senate have primary responsibility for approving expenditures.[24] Since the 1960s, the Armed Services committees of the two chambers have also become major participants in the defense budget process, authorizing funding for specific programs.[25] After 1974, a third layer of congressional review was created, the Budget committees.[26] The Budget Committee in each chamber considers the entire executive branch

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[23] The Department of Defense notes that it provides, on average, 6 witnesses and 14 hours of testimony for each day Congress is in session. Department of Defense, Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Defense Management Report to the President* (Washington, DC: Office of the Secretary of Defense, July 1989), p. 27. Senior DoD officials spend approximately 3,000 hours each year preparing and giving testimony to Congress. The department also presents over 1,000 briefings to members and their staff in addition to responding to telephone and written inquiries. Department of Defense, Office of the Secretary of Defense, *White Paper on The Department of Defense and the Congress* (Washington, DC: Office of the Secretary of Defense, January 1990), p. 29.

[24] The first step in the appropriations process is for the smaller Defense Appropriations subcommittees to scrutinize and approve funding for the Department of Defense.

[25] See Edward Kolodziej, *The Uncommon Defense and the Congress: 1945-1963* (Columbus, OH: Ohio State University Press, 1966). Until the 1960s, the Armed Services committees authorized programs for the Department of Defense, but did not pass on funding levels for those programs. The Air Force would be authorized to purchase a particular number of aircraft, but the approval of funds for those aircraft was the task of the Appropriations Committee. In the 1960s, the Armed Services committees gradually extended their consideration of funding, making it necessary for Armed Services to "authorize an appropriation," which would subsequently be "appropriated" by the Appropriations committees.

[26] The House has 435 members, the Senate 100. In the 102nd Congress (1991-92) the Defense Appropriations subcommittees contained 13 (8 Democrats and 5 Republicans) members in the House and 18 (10 Democrats and 8 Republicans) members in the Senate (The full Appropriations Committees included 59 members in the House and 29 members in the Senate.) The Armed Services committees had 54 (33 Democrats and 21 Republicans) members in the House and 20 (11 Democrats and 9 Republicans) members in the Senate. The Budget committees had 37 members in the House (23 Democrats and 14 Republicans) and 21 in the Senate (12 Democrats and 9 Republicans). Membership on these three committees does not overlap greatly.

budget request and approves overall funding levels for 13 "functions" of the federal budget, including "national defense."[27]

In terms of process, the Budget Committees receive the federal budget and approve a resolution, which the House and Senate subsequently debate and vote upon, setting an overall level for defense expenditures (or "budget authority"). This overall level is then communicated to the authorizing (Armed Services) and appropriating (Appropriations) committees as the ceiling under which they should work.[28] The Budget committees can and do debate defense policy and spending levels, but they do not approve any specific personnel or weapon programs line items. By virtue of their authority to set overall levels, however, the Budget committees can constrain the choices other committees make on the defense budget. More recently, as a result of the Budget Enforcement Act (BEA) of 1990, the Budget committees' influence has been significantly reduced because the BEA predetermined the level of defense spending for FY 1991-93.[29]

The Armed Services and Appropriations committees begin their scrutiny of the defense budget at the same time as the Budget Committee and in considerably greater detail. They hear public and classified testimony and review Pentagon documentation. The Secretary of Defense and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs generally present the initial budget request to these committees, followed by a stream of witnesses from the Comptroller's office, the Deputy Secretary of Defense, the secretaries (civilian) and chiefs (military) of the services, the commanders of the unified and specified commands, as well as heads of defense agencies and the directors of specific military programs.[30] Many of the same witnesses testify before all four committees.[31]

Generally working under the ceilings imposed by the Budget committees, the Armed Services committees review this testimony and the budget submissions and "mark up" (approve) their version of the Defense Authorization Act, first in subcommittee and then in full committee. For the Armed Services committees, this act covers funding decisions on

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[27] The national defense function includes not only the Defense Department budget, but nuclear weapons activities of the Department of Energy. The Department of Energy, which succeeded the earlier Atomic Energy Commission in the federal bureaucracy, conducts all research and production activity on nuclear warheads for the military.

[28] In the process of preparing this resolution, the Budget committees seek informal guidance from authorizers and appropriators as to appropriate funding levels.

[29] The spending caps for defense outlays are $333, $302 and $291 billion for fiscal years 1991, 1992 and 1993, respectively. Office of Management and Budget, *Budget of the United States Government, Fiscal Year 1993* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1992), Appendix 2, p. 7.

[30] See *Defense Management Report, supra* #23.

[31] The Armed Services committees and the Defense Appropriations subcommittees of the House and Senate are commonly referred to as the "Big Four," as the top four congressional bodies that set defense policy.

specific programs, as well as a wide variety of legislative provisions requesting specific items of action by the Department of Defense or reports to Congress within the following year. For example, the committee has in the past required the Department of Defense to purchase coal for troops based in Germany from suppliers in the state of Pennsylvania, and required reports on future plans for strategic nuclear forces. None of these committees, however, is able to perform a comprehensive review of the entire budget. They also are unable to continuously review progress in a program year-to-year, instead picking and choosing each year which programs they will fully review.

Both the House and Senate Armed Services committees pass a bill, and with it, issue a committee report explaining the bill's provisions. This bill is then debated and voted upon in each chamber. That debate and vote generally cover a range of issues from overall funding to decisions on specific programs, based on amendments to the bill proposed by individuals or groups of members. Generally, however, the chambers only review a few of the decisions made in committee. Once each chamber has passed a Defense Authorization Act, the differences between the two versions must be reconciled through a "conference" of representatives of the two Armed Services committees, leading to a "conference report" and yet another vote on the floor of each chamber. Often the conference can involve significant differences in the spending priorities of the two committees with the final numbers coming out somewhere between the higher levels set by the typically more conservative Senate Armed Services Committee and the lower levels set by the House Armed Services Committee.

This bill, however, only authorizes funding, it does not appropriate the actual funds for defense programs, a responsibility which belongs to the Appropriations Committees. Their work starts with Defense Subcommittee hearings and markup, followed by full Appropriations Committee markup. Following congressional rules, the House must act first, holding a floor vote on the committee bill and then reporting it to the Senate, which inevitably changes the appropriation to suit its own committee decisions and floor vote. This leads to another conference and subsequent vote on the conference report. Defense appropriators generally defer to the authorizers on specific programmatic decisions, seldom adding on spending, but sometimes curtailing programs fiscally. The appropriations process pays little attention to legislative and reporting requirements associated with the budget, but significant attention to the specific, individual funding decisions on defense programs.

As this brief description of the congressional process suggests, much of the civil-military tension over the defense budget occurs at the level of the congressional defense budget process. Given the wide array of attitudes toward the military to be found in Congress, the degree to which the structures and the relationship have functioned successfully over time is surprising. A closer examination of some key ingredients of this process suggests the reasons for this success.

Changing the Defense Budget Request

The will of Congress with respect to defense spending is reflected in the changes it makes in the budget. Despite assertions that Congress irresponsibly drives defense budgets sharply up or down, historically Congress has made only marginal changes in the requested level of total defense spending. For example, while congressional action decreased the DoD budget request seven times and increased it four times between 1960 and 1970, in only four of those years was the change larger than 1.7 percent, with the largest change being a 7.49 percent decrease in FY 1970.[32] In the 1980s, despite major debate over the level of defense spending, Congress approved more than 95 percent of the defense funds requested by the administration.[33]

Congress does, however, alter the details in the defense budget, leading to frequent allegations of "micromanagement" by the military services, who are concerned about congressional intrusion into the details of defense management.[34] Over recent decades, Congress and its committees have repeatedly added, deleted and changed program[s], added reporting requirements, delayed program decisions, and in a variety of ways "meddled" in the details of defense planning in a way that could arouse the ire of the most democratically-inclined military officer. For example, in the 1991 congressional debate over supplemental (additional) funding for the Gulf War, the House Appropriations Committee added language to the bill demanding that the Department of Defense continue to manufacture F-14D aircraft (despite Navy desires to terminate the contract for the program) and insisted that two contractor sources continue to be maintained for production of the Tomahawk missile.[35]

Such apparent civilian intrusions in defense planning are more subtle than they appear, however, since the military are often involved in the very changes Congress is accused of making. For example, since 1990, the Secretary of Defense has attempted to eliminate funding for the V-22 Osprey, a new vertical/horizontal cargo and passenger aircraft for the Marine Corps. Congress regularly has refused, restoring research and production funding

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[32] Arnold Kanter, "Congress and the Defense Budget: 1960-1970," *American Political Science Review*, 66, p. 132. For more recent data, see Gehman, "Congressional Committees and National Defense Investments," *supra* #4.

[33] House of Representatives, Democratic Study Group, "Beyond the Water's Edge — Beyond the Facts," Special Report 102-1 (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, February 11, 1991), p. 1.

[34] The Department of Defense reports that every working day brings three new General Accounting Office audits and 450 written and 2,500 phone inquiries from Capitol Hill. *Defense Management Report*, *supra* #24, p. 27.

[35] John E. Yang, "House Panel Approves $15.8 Billion to Help Cover Added Gulf War Costs," *Washington Post*, March 6, 1991, p. A13. House of Representatives, Appropriations Committee, *Dire Emergency Supplemental Appropriations for the Consequences of Operation Desert Storm/Desert Shield*, March 5, 1991, p. 10.

over Pentagon opposition. There is little doubt, however, that this congressional action is actually welcomed by the Marine Corps itself. Though Marine testimony loyally supports the Secretary's wishes, it is also made clear that the aircraft would be a welcome addition to the Marine Corps budget, provided funding can be found.[36]

This more subtle and common interplay between Congress and the military services suggests that not every congressional change is an unwelcome micromanagement. To cite another example from the Gulf War supplemental debate, the Department of Defense sought funding for a relatively large number of Patriot and Tomahawk missiles. The House Defense Appropriations subcommittee initially trimmed that request to a number which would be sufficient to replace the missiles fired in the Gulf, but reportedly did so in close consultation with the Department of Defense; the subcommittee then restored the original request in a second supplemental bill later that same year.[37]

Inevitably, some congressional decisions do reshape DoD budget plans. In FY 1991, for example, Congress cut $2 billion from the DoD request for the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI). There was no consultation or DoD agreement in this case, simply a deep, long-standing policy disagreement in which Congress exercised its will. It is rare for Congress to enact such deep reductions in a program, however, and virtually unprecedented for Congress to completely terminate funding for a major weapons program.[38] Congress usually supports the Defense Department's conventional weapons requests, although occasionally it wants to follow a different approach in strategic weapons procurement. Congressional cuts in a conventional system typically occur, not because Congress wants to eliminate a program, but because it seeks to apply the funds to another purpose.

Despite the tensions over such changes through most of the past 45 years, the budgetary disagreements and discussions between Congress and the Pentagon have focused on program details and not fundamental differences about the roles and missions of the military. While there have been congressional members and caucuses favoring deep cuts in the defense budget, a dramatic overhaul of roles and missions, and the elimination of weapons programs, and others who favor rapid growth and increased program funding, neither has commanded a

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[36] Eric Rosenberg, "Marines Work Hill on Osprey's Behalf," *Defense Week*, January 8, 1990; "Outgoing Marine Commandant Makes Strong Pitch for V-22," *Aerospace Daily*, May 20, 1991, p. 288.

[37] Author's interviews. See Caleb Baker, Phil Finnegan and Robert Holzer, "Opposition Mounts in Congress to War Supplement Request," *Defense News*, March 4, 1991, p. 22. See also U.S. House of Representatives, *Report of the Committee on Appropriations*, 102-95 (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1991), pp. 103, 124.

[38] In the debate over the FY 1992 defense budget, the B-2 bomber nearly proved to be an exception to this rule, though, despite long and deep congressional opposition, this $65 billion program has continued to receive funding. Previous major cancellations -- the B-1B bomber (1977), the DIVAD/Sergeant York air defense gun (1985) and the A-12 attack bomber (1991) -- have all been carried out by the Department of Defense itself, not Congress.

majority. Instead, decisions are generally made on the middle ground, many of them in committees and a few on the floor.[39] This pattern of compromise reflects a long history of interaction between the military and the key committees in Congress. That interaction has strengthened the moderates on defense in Congress, permitting both sides to win some legislative battles, while losing others, but agreeing to live with the outcome.[40]

The strength of this centrist consensus could well be tested in the 1990s. The disappearance of the Warsaw Pact and the Soviet Union, and virtual dissolution of the former Soviet military combine to eliminate the "threat" which has provided an underlying source of congressional/executive agreement. U.S. military roles and missions are under the kind of full-scale review and revision which has only one precedent – the beginning of the Cold War in the late 1940s. It remains to be seen how Congress and the executive branch will elaborate a new consensus on U.S. forces and defense budgets for the post-Cold War era. The process for this discussion, however, will involve the same interaction: consideration of the defense budget, which in the past has produced a package that each side has been able to accept.

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[39] The Congressional Black Caucus, for example, led on this issue by Representative Ronald V. Dellums (D-CA), has for more than a decade sought deep reductions in defense budgets; its floor amendments (i.e. proposals presented to the entire Congress for a vote) to that effect are generally supported by less than 25 percent of the House of Representatives. Supporters of strategic defense have generally sought funding at least at the level requested by the Department of Defense, but have failed in that effort for several years now. There is also a Congressional Military Reform Caucus made up of members who are interested in improving our conventional defenses and the defense procurement process. The Arms Control and Foreign Policy Caucus, which supports arms control, provides information to members interested in foreign and military policy, but takes no organizational position on legislation.

[40] This consensus is clearly a swinging pendulum, however. Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger, for example, refused — some felt stubbornly — to accommodate congressional pressures for slower growth in the defense budget, a refusal which may have contributed to relatively sharp congressional reductions in Weinberger's budget requests after FY 1985. Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney, a former member of Congress, appears to have restored some comity in the relationship between Congress and the Pentagon. For recent comprehensive congressional statements on roles and missions, see Senator Sam Nunn, *Nunn, 1990: A New Military Strategy* (Washington, DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1990); Senator John McCain, "Setting the Right Priorities for the 1990's: Shaping the FY 1992 Defense Budget to Meet America's Strategic Needs," June 25, 1991; and Representative Les Aspin, "An Approach to Sizing American Conventional Forces For the Post-Soviet Era" (Washington, DC: House Armed Services Committee, February 25, 1992).

III. THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF DEFENSE

In the United States, this civil–military relationship is further strengthened, and a middle ground often reached, because of the degree to which defense spending issues are also important local and state issues for House and Senate members.[41] Unlike many other countries with parliamentary systems, where national political majorities can dominate the individual representation of local interests, the porous and relatively undisciplined nature of Congress permits and even encourages members to promote and defend the political, social and economic interests of the district or state they represent.

This local quality of debate and representation covers most areas of public policy, but is especially evident with respect to defense. The Department of Defense purchases roughly 75 percent of all the goods and services bought by the federal government from the private sector and maintains a nationwide network of military bases and supply and administrative operations.[42] Although the overall importance of defense spending to the national economy has declined sharply over the past four decades, defense decisions can have important local, corporate and employment impacts[43] (see Figure IV and Table V).

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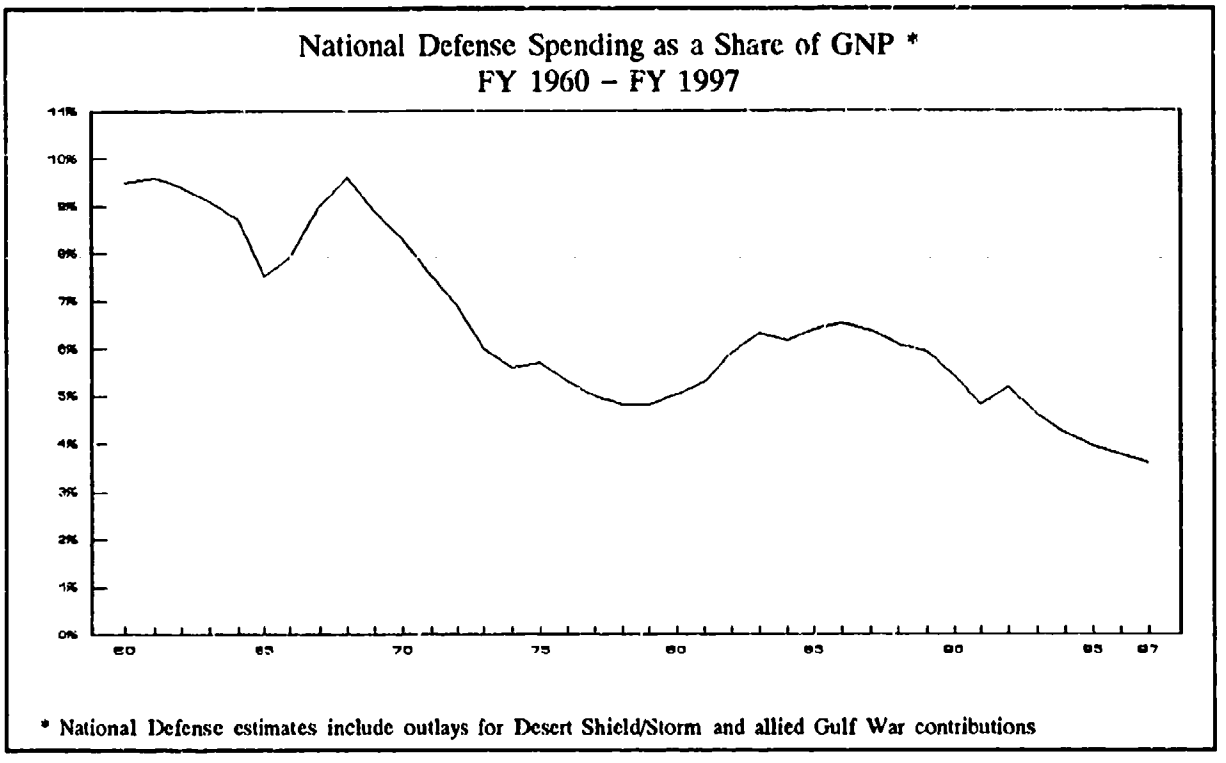
[41] See Adams, *The Politics of Defense Contracting, supra* #8, for a detailed discussion of the "political economy" of defense in the United States. See also Gordon Adams and Randall Humm, "The U.S. Military–Industrial Complex and National Strategy" in *Strategic Power: USA/USSR*, ed. Carl G. Jacobsen (London: Macmillan, 1990), pp. 286–97 and Mayer, *The Political Economy of Defense Contracting, supra* #8.

[42] For example, of the $417.8 billion in government purchases of goods and services in 1990, $309.1 billion were defense–related and $108.7 billion were non–defense. *Budget of the U.S. Government, FY 1992* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1991), p. 175.

[43] See David Gold and Gordon Adams, "Defense Spending and the American Economy," *Defense Economics*, 1 (1990), pp. 275–93; Gordon Adams, "Economic Adjustment to Lower Defense Spending," Testimony before the Defense Industry and Technology Subcommittee of the Senate Armed Services Committee, May 4, 1990; Conrad Schmidt and Steven Kosiak, "Potential Impact of Defense Spending Reductions on the Defense Labor Force by State" (Washington, DC: Defense Budget Project, March 1992).

Figure IV



* National Defense estimates include outlays for Desert Shield/Storm and allied Gulf War contributions

This complex political economy is sometimes described as a "military-industrial complex." However, the decline in the importance of defense spending for the overall economy suggests that this "complex" does not hold the kind of national political sway implied. The political economy of defense, however, does play an important role in creating a complex, but stable framework for civil-military relations. To describe local impacts as a reflection of the "pork barrel" side of the defense budget only captures one dimension of this political complexity.

It is certainly true that the presence of a major base or defense contractor in a district makes the protection of that base or contractor important to the long-term political survival of a member of Congress.[44] Many defense decisions in Congress can be linked, in part, to an individual member's interests. For example, support for the V-22 aircraft in Congress has

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[44] Representative Thomas Downey (D-NY), for example, made it clear that he considered support for the programs of the large local contractor, Grumman, as part of his job: "I'm the congressman from that district and I'm on the Armed Services Committee. It's my job, whether I think the A-6 is good or not, to support it." Stubbing, *The Defense Game, supra* #14, p. 91. The F-14 amendment to the FY 1991 Gulf supplemental budget previously noted was sponsored by Representative Robert Mrazek (D-NY), also from Long Island, NY, where Grumman is based. Representative George Hochbrueckner (D-NY), another member of the Long Island congressional delegation, sits on the Armed Services Committee and voted for continuing the F-14 program. "Panel Approves $1B F-14D Deal," *Long Island Newsday*, May 9, 1991, p. 3.

Table V

State Shares of Defense Purchases and Defense Industry Employment: FY 1991

	1991 State Share of U.S. Defense Purchases	1991 Defense Share of Total Purchases	1991 State Defense Industry Employment	Defense Industry Employment as Share of 1991 State Employment
VA*	5.0%	10.3%	155,270	4.9%
AK	0.2%	9.2%	7,304	3.2%
HI	0.4%	7.9%	11,284	2.1%
CT*	3.2%	7.8%	99,419	6.0%
WA	2.6%	7.6%	79,158	3.4%
CA*	18.4%	7.4%	569,523	4.1%
MD	2.8%	7.2%	87,608	3.7%
ME	0.5%	7.0%	15,460	2.6%
MS	1.1%	7.0%	33,188	3.1%
MA*	4.5%	7.0%	140,352	4.8%
NM	0.6%	6.5%	17,161	2.5%
AZ	1.8%	6.3%	54,436	3.4%
MO	2.8%	6.1%	86,991	3.4%
UT	0.7%	6.0%	23,106	3.0%
DC	0.6%	5.9%	17,817	7.1%
CO	1.7%	5.8%	53,184	3.2%
AL	1.4%	5.6%	44,192	2.5%
RI	0.4%	5.5%	12,859	2.7%
NH	0.5%	5.4%	16,306	2.8%
FL*	3.9%	5.1%	119,406	2.0%
OK	0.9%	5.1%	28,365	2.0%
SC	0.9%	5.0%	26,766	1.7%
TX*	6.5%	5.0%	202,676	2.5%
GA	2.1%	4.9%	65,935	2.2%
KS	0.8%	4.8%	25,759	2.0%
IN	2.2%	4.7%	68,406	2.7%
OH*	4.3%	4.7%	132,442	2.6%
LA	1.3%	4.6%	40,973	2.3%
VT	0.2%	4.6%	6,353	2.2%
NJ*	3.0%	4.5%	93,841	2.5%
PA*	4.0%	4.3%	123,108	2.2%
ND	0.1%	4.3%	3,510	1.2%
NY*	6.0%	4.2%	185,532	2.4%
MN	1.5%	4.1%	47,557	2.1%
AR	0.6%	4.1%	18,091	1.8%
NC	1.6%	4.1%	48,065	1.5%
NE	0.3%	3.9%	9,512	1.2%
KY	0.7%	3.9%	22,318	1.4%
NV	0.2%	3.8%	6,037	1.0%
MT	0.1%	3.8%	3,670	1.0%
DE	0.2%	3.7%	7,091	2.1%
TN	1.1%	3.7%	34,374	1.5%
WY	0.1%	3.7%	3,573	1.6%
IL	2.8%	3.5%	87,217	1.6%
SD	0.1%	3.5%	3,253	0.9%
WI	1.3%	3.5%	39,139	1.6%
WV	0.4%	3.5%	11,339	1.6%
IA	0.6%	3.4%	20,129	1.4%
MI	2.3%	3.3%	70,869	1.7%
ID	0.1%	3.3%	4,450	0.9%
OR	0.5%	3.3%	15,625	1.1%
USA	100.0%		3,100,000	
AVG		5.2%		2.5%

Source: Defense Budget Project, based on Dept. of Defense and Dept. of Labor data.
* indicates the top ten states which together account for over 58 percent of DoD purchases.

been led by members of the congressional delegations from Texas and Pennsylvania. Textron/Bell of Ft. Worth, Texas and Boeing/Vertol of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania are the joint producers of the V-22. Likewise, the partially successful effort to save an Army training base in Ft. Dix from closure in 1991 was led by the New Jersey congressional delegation.[45]

Although the military services often complain that weapon programs and basing decisions reflect such parochial corporate, community or employment concerns, these efforts are not necessarily sufficient to guarantee a program's survival. In the debates over the FY 1991, FY 1992 and FY 1993 defense budgets, a number of hardware programs have ended or been targeted for termination, despite the negative local political and economic consequences of such decisions. These programs include the AH-64 Apache helicopter, M-1 tank, M-2 Bradley infantry fighting vehicle, F-15E fighter, B-2 stealth bomber, Seawolf submarine and even the F-14D. These decisions are all being driven by shrinking defense resources. Thus, these terminations, despite their local economic importance, may be slowed, but cannot be avoided.

The political economy of defense spending is complex. The military services, which are acutely aware of the local politics of defense decisions, have used such knowledge to increase support for some programs. For example, the Air Force and the prime contractor (Lockheed) for the C-5 cargo aircraft coordinated lobbying activity in the early 1980s in order to encourage support for new C-5B funding from Congress.[46]

What these interactions show is not that defense decisions flow from pork rather than from policy, but that pork and policy are inevitably mixed in the debate over the defense budget. Although many defense budget decisions are outside such political considerations, the long history of contentious budget debates over bases and hardware programs makes it clear that such a mix exists.[47] What is important for the purposes of understanding civil-military relations in the United States is that policy and local interest *are* intertwined and that both elected and military representatives are conscious of this connection. The relationship has its negative consequences: some bases are kept open, although rationally they should

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[45] Senator Bill Bradley, "Letter to Mr. James McDermott," General Accounting Office Supplement to a Report to the Congress and the Chairman, Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission, *Military Bases: Letters and Requests Received on Proposed Closures and Realignments* (Washington, DC: U.S. Congress, General Accounting Office, May 1991), p. 59.

[46] James Coates and Michael Kilian, *Heavy Losses: The Dangerous Decline of American Defense* (New York: Viking, 1985), p. 105.

[47] See, for example, Kotz, *Wild Blue Yonder, supra* #18; Stubbing, *The Defense Game, supra* #14; Weida and Gertcher, *The Political Economy of National Defense, supra* #19; Robert Art, *The TFX Decision: McNamara and the Military* (Boston: Little, Brown Publishers, 1968); and Jacques S. Gansler, *Affordable Defense* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1990).

close, and some contracts are extended or approved that should be terminated.[48] It also has its positive consequences for the functioning of the civil-military relationship, smoothing understanding and reenforcing a consensus in the defense budget debate.

The impact of this political economy on the defense debate is difficult to measure.[49] Not all military hardware programs or bases exist simply because of it; clearly, national security considerations continue to drive defense planning. Nor is it easy to separate the two: one member's "pork" is another member's "critical requirement for American national security." Moreover, it is certain that once actual combat has tested military deployment or hardware capabilities, what once was "pork" may have become a vital ingredient of American defense.[50]

Mediating/Informational Institutions for Congress

The interaction between the Pentagon and Congress over the defense budget is further strengthened and reenforced by a number of mediating institutions. Besides the formal interactions between congressional committees and the services, a number of less formal institutions exist to fill critical information needs for Congress and ensure constant interaction between Congress and the Department of Defense over the defense budget.

Perhaps most importantly, by contrast with the experience of most other countries, Congress has an ample supply of staff expertise on defense matters, both for individual members and for the defense committees, as well as a variety of research institutions

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[48] No U.S. bases were closed for ten years between 1978 and 1988, in large part because Congress resisted such decisions. However, the 1988 Base Closing Commission managed to decide on the closure of more than 20 major U.S. defense installations, in large part because its decisions were presented as a package to Congress, which had approved, in advance, a procedure requiring the rejection of the entire package for any one proposal to fail. This process was repeated in 1991, with the creation of another base-closing commission, which led to the closure of 34 additional bases and the realignment of 48 others. See Defense Secretary's Commission on Base Realignment and Closure, *Base Realignments and Closures* (Washington, DC: Office of the Secretary of Defense, December 1988) and Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission, *Report to the President* (Washington, DC: Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission, July 1, 1991).

[49] Recent congressional voting studies by James M. Lindsay suggest "parochial" concerns are more of a factor in conventional weapon decisions than strategic weapons and have greater influence on military base closings than other defense spending decisions. See his "Congress and the Defense Budget: Parochialism or Policy," in *Arms, Politics, and the Economy*, ed. Robert Higgs (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1990) and "Parochialism, Policy, and Constituency Constraints: Congressional Voting on Strategic Weapon Systems," *American Journal of Political Science*, 34, November 1990. See also Mayer, *The Political Economy of Defense Contracting, supra* #8.

[50] To some extent the experience of the Gulf War demonstrated this point. Programs that were much criticized as pork or for performance problems, such as the M-1 tank, M-2 Bradley, Apache helicopter and F-18 fighter, appear to have performed well in their military missions.

reporting to Congress on defense matters.[51] Most individual members, especially those involved with defense committees, have at least one staff person with sole or partial responsibility for defense. Each of the committees reviewing the defense budget has defense staff — minimal for the Budget Committee, but numerous for the Armed Services and Defense Appropriations committees. These committee staff are often people with military or defense policy experience who sometimes move back and forth between the Pentagon and Congress.[52] The possession of a skilled, experienced staff ensures that members of Congress, especially on the key committees, have their own capability to assess defense budgets independently of the Pentagon.

This independent capability has been substantially reenforced by the existence of a number of governmental research and auditing institutions which report to Congress on defense matters, including the budget. For years, the General Accounting Office, an auditing arm of Congress, has conducted close scrutiny of defense budgets and spending through its National Security and International Affairs Division. The Congressional Research Service also maintains a staff capable of researching defense budget issues for Congress. The 1974 Budget and Impoundment Act created still another organization, the Congressional Budget Office, which includes a well-staffed National Security Division to research budget proposals and options in the defense arena for Congress. Most recently, the congressional Office of Technology Assessment has begun to analyze defense policy issues for the Congress. These different, often overlapping, research capacities significantly strengthen the ability of Congress to analyze and understand defense budget issues independently of the Department of Defense. By strengthening Congress, they help balance DoD control over information resources.

There is yet another important network which facilitates civil-military relations and provides information on defense budgets and spending options: the vast array of private and nonprofit think tanks and research and policy groups. Such groups include a wide number of institutes at the center of the political and policy spectrum: the American Enterprise Institute, Brookings Institution, Carnegie Endowment, Center for Strategic and International Studies, Council on Foreign Relations and Defense Budget Project, among many others. There are also more advocacy-oriented analytical groups, such as the liberal Center for Defense Information and Institute for Defense and Disarmament Studies, the conservative Heritage Foundation and the libertarian Cato Institute. While not all focus exclusively on the budget,

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[51] The number of defense committee staff has grown substantially over the past 20 years. Overall, congressional committee staffs increased by 237 percent from 1960 to 1985; the increase from 1964 to 1989 in defense committee staffers was 268 percent. During that period the Defense Appropriations subcommittees and the Armed Services committees went from 37 staff members to 99. An additional 66 staff members work on defense issues for committee members or congressional support agencies. See Wilbur D. Jones, Jr., "Congressional Involvement and Relations" (Ft. Belvoir, VA: Defense Systems Management College, July 1989), p. 20 in Office of the Secretary of Defense, *White Paper on the Department of Defense and the Congress, supra #23*; Michael Malbin, *Unelected Representatives* (New York: Basic Books, 1980).

[52] Sean O'Keefe, DoD comptroller under Secretary Cheney, for example, was previously with the minority staff of the Senate Defense Appropriations subcommittee.

many of them scrutinize the DoD budget request closely and provide Congress and the Pentagon with their views.[53] In addition, these groups conduct forums and seminars where researchers, members and staff of Congress, and defense officials meet to discuss budgetary and policy issues, providing the opportunity for contact, socialization and exchange of information. There are also organizations which actually lobby for defense policies through grassroots mobilization and congressional campaigns. These groups include the American Defense Lobby, American Security Council, Council for a Livable World, Physicians for Social Responsibility, SANE/FREEZE: Campaign for New Priorities, Union of Concerned Scientists, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Women's Action for New Directions and many others.

The military services themselves also maintain constant communication with legislators through congressional liaison offices within the Pentagon (to respond to congressional inquiries) and extensions of those offices on Capitol Hill (to brief Congress on budget and policy issues and respond to congressional needs). A tour of duty in one of these offices is considered a valuable part of training for career advancement in the military. In addition, a number of job exchanges and fellowships exist to provide congressional work experience to DoD civilian and military employees. Similarly, military veterans who go on to become congressional staff or members of Congress provide important links between Congress and Department of Defense.

Finally, there is one other key, outside institution which informs congressional consideration of the defense budget: an independent press, including a substantial "trade press" devoted to specialized coverage of defense matters. Well-informed, consistent coverage of the significant flow of defense information and of congressional debate informs that debate, translates arcane data into accessible language for policymakers, and serves as an informational beltway between Congress, the executive branch and the defense analytical community.[54]

Communication is the key to all of these networks. Exchange of information and access to data contribute to an atmosphere of general trust between the elected and military part of the government.

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[53] Two examples of such recent scrutiny are William Kaufmann, *Glasnost, Perestroika and U.S. Defense Spending* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 1990) and Defense Budget Project, *Responding to Changing Threats: A Report of the Defense Budget Project's Task Force on the FY 1992 - FY 1997 Defense Plan* (Washington, DC: Defense Budget Project, 1991).

[54] See, among others, *Aviation Week & Space Technology, Aerospace Daily, Defense News, Defense Week* and *Inside the Pentagon*, as well as detailed coverage of the defense budget and policy and industry issues by specialized reporters in the *New York Times, Washington Post, Wall Street Journal, Time, Newsweek, Business Week* and many regional newspapers.

IV. CONCLUSION

Despite persistent conflict and disagreement between civilian policymakers and the military in the United States, this relationship has been remarkably stable. The process of creating, debating and approving the defense budget has been an important element in developing that stability. Policy and program differences are mediated through the budget discussions. The keys to this process are information and a willingness to compromise.

Within the executive branch, there has been a gradual accumulation of capability and authority in the Office of the Secretary of Defense, allowing that office to "manage" relationships within the military. Each side has its responsibilities and there appears to be general agreement on the rules of the game. At the White House level, there is less detailed intervention in the budget process, but clearly a capability to do so, if desired, through OMB. Since the United States has almost never had an administration whose defense policies could be considered "anti-military," there has not been the kind of tension over policy and budgetary issues which can be found in other countries.

Potentially the most difficult civil-military relationship in the American political structure is between Congress and the services. Despite a wide range of congressional views on defense, however, even this relationship has remained fairly stable. Here, too, with ample information and a willingness to compromise, the budget process plays a key role. Congress receives voluminous data on the budget, programs and policies of the Department of Defense and has a key role as public reviewer of this data. As an institution, it has a complex, interactive process for reviewing that budget in detail.

Congressional will is exercised through changes in the budget submission. These modifications have, historically, been minor with respect to the total resources for defense, but major when it comes to programmatic decisions, although Congress almost never completely terminates a defense program. Even here, compromise seems to prevail. The center of the congressional political spectrum has few fundamental differences with the military when it comes to roles and missions.

The centrist consensus on defense in Congress is reenforced by the political economy of defense spending. The importance of programs and military bases to the districts of individual members can temper the views of even the strongest opponent of the military. While this intertwining of politics and policy is sometimes criticized as a source of waste and spending, and poor program decisions, it may actually provide a healthy basis for negotiations over defense plans and for stable relationships between elected representatives and the military services.

The civil-military relationship with respect to Congress is further reenforced by the ample supply of expertise and information on defense budget and policy matters available to Congress. This expertise comes from member and committee staff, congressional research institutions, a vast network of private sector research centers and even from military representatives charged with congressional liaison missions.

Defense budgets provide an important framework within which U.S. civil-military relationships are negotiated. The transferability of this experience to other countries is less clear. The absence of a parliamentary majority system in the United States makes such consensus-building necessary, reenforcing the tendency toward compromise. A societal preference for disclosure of information on government activities encourages a generous supply of data on defense, primarily delivered through the budget. Moreover, there is a consensus, based on the Constitution, that the civil side of American government has a mandated role in the funding of military activities.

What may be transferrable are the attitudes of information-sharing and compromise, whose impact will depend on the political structures and expectations in other countries. It seems clear that more generous information and discussion can moderate conflicts and create the terrain for agreement, over the long term. Such agreement, in turn, can reenforce the strength of democratic government.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Appropriation – One form of budget authority provided by Congress permitting federal agencies to incur obligations and to make payments out of the Treasury for specific purposes. An appropriation is the most common means of providing budget authority and usually follows the passage of an authorization.

Appropriation Title – The most general category in the defense budget as approved by Congress. Major defense titles include military personnel; operations and maintenance; procurement; research, development, test and evaluation (RDT&E); military construction; family housing; and revolving and management funds. Appropriation titles are divided into budget activities or line items.

Authorization – Legislation that establish or maintains a government program or agency by defining its scope and that usually sets a specific limit on how much Congress can appropriate for that program. Authorizing legislation is normally a prerequisite for appropriation. An authorization does not make money available.

Baseline – Generally, a projection of federal revenues and spending under a specific scenario. This projection is used as a benchmark against which to measure the effects of proposed changes in taxes and spending, but is not a forecast of future budgets.

Budget Authority – The authority granted to a federal agency in an appropriations bill to enter into commitments which result in future spending. Budget authority is not necessarily the amount of money an agency or department actually will spend during a fiscal year, but merely the upper limit on the amount of new spending commitments it can make.

Note: These are adapted in part from Stanley Collender, *The Guide to the Federal Budget, Fiscal 1992* (Washington, DC: Urban Institute Press, January 1992), pp. 175–85.

Budget Resolution – Legislation passed by Congress that establishes the congressional budget level for the fiscal year. This resolution is expected to pass by April 15 and establishes binding figures for the aggregate levels of budget authority for each of the budget functions. A budget resolution does not require the president's signature.

Constant Dollars – A measure of the dollar value of goods and services adjusted for inflation. Constant dollars are calculated by dividing current dollars by an appropriate price index, in a process called "deflating."

Current Dollars – The dollar value of goods and services as measured in prevailing prices at the time the goods were sold or services rendered.

Defense Planning Guidance – The Defense Department document which provides the basic justification for DoD programs and budgets, and provides general guidance to the services and defense agencies on the development of their Program Objective Memoranda.

Deficit – The amount by which annual outlays exceed annual revenues, measured by fiscal years.

Fiscal Year – Any yearly account period. The fiscal year for the federal government begins October 1 and ends on September 30. The federal fiscal year is designated by the calendar year in which it ends. FY 1992 began October 1, 1991 and ends September 30, 1992.

Future Years Defense Plan (FYDP) – Sets the foundation for the annual defense budget request, providing force structure planning, a road map for modernization and overall fiscal guidance.

Line Items – Also called program elements or programs, they are the basic building blocks of appropriation titles.

Mark-Up – The process by which members of a committee or subcommittee approve, amend or reject provisions in proposed legislation.

National Defense Function – One of nineteen function categories of the federal budget. It consists of the Department of Defense budget, which funds all direct DoD military programs, and a number of defense-related activities administered by other agencies. The DoD budget constitutes 97 percent of the National Defense budget function.

Obligated Balance – The amount of budget authority appropriated and committed in the form of contracts for goods and services, but not yet actually spent.

Obligations – The federal government's spending commitments that will require outlays either immediately or in the future.

Outlays – Actual dollar amount spent for a particular activity. Total outlays in a given year result from both new budget authority provided in that year and from unexpended balances of budget authority remaining from previous years.

Outyear – In general usage, any of the fiscal years that follow the budget year. For example, the 102nd Congress convened in January 1992, and debated the FY 1993 budget. This means that the current year is fiscal 1992, the budget year is fiscal 1993, and the outyears are 1994 and beyond.

Planning, Programming, and Budgeting System (PPBS) – A formalized process developed by Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara in the 1960s that consists of a planning phase focusing on developing the Defense Policy Guidance and general assessments of threats, force requirements, strategy and resources; a programming phase in which the services calculate the numbers and types of forces needed to satisfy the Defense Planning Guidance; and a budgeting phase where the financial requirements of DoD programs are finalized and approved by the Secretary of Defense.

Program Objective Memorandum (POM) – Detailed list of proposed programs submitted by the Army, Navy and Air Force to the Department of Defense in response to the requirements in the Defense Planning Guidance.

Rescission – An action of the president that cancels previously appropriated budget authority. A proposed rescission must be reported to Congress by the president in a rescission message. If both houses do not approve the proposed rescission within 45 days, the president must obligate the budget authority as it was intended by Congress.

Supplemental Appropriation – A legislative act appropriating funds in addition to the regular annual appropriations. Supplemental appropriations are supposed to be enacted when the need for additional funds is too urgent to be postponed until the next regular appropriation is considered, although they are often enacted for other reasons as well.

Unobligated Balance – The amount of budget authority previously granted to an agency in an appropriation that has not yet been committed to a project, thereby continuing to be available for future obligation and spending.

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